



City of Albuquerque

Legislative File Number M-05-22 (version 1)

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE SIXTEENTH COUNCIL

Expressing The City Council's Opposition To Oil And Gas Development In The Valle Vidal And On The Otero Mesa And Urging The Members Of New Mexico's Congressional Delegation To Support Both Governor Richardson's And Representative Udall's Efforts To Conserve And Protect These Valuable Environmental Resources.

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE SIXTEENTH COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Valle Vidal was donated to the American people as a "Multiple Use Area" in 1982, to be managed primarily for its wildlife resources, as well as its recreational and scenic value; and

WHEREAS, the Valle Vidal serves as a vital resource to the ranching and agricultural communities of northern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the largest herd of elk in the state of New Mexico call the Valle Vidal home; and

WHEREAS, the people of New Mexico, and people from all over the country, come to Valle Vidal for its magnificent scenery and opportunities to hike, backpack, horseback ride, and enjoy world-class hunting and fishing opportunities; and

WHEREAS, one of the types of energy development proposed for the Valle Vidal, coal bed methane development, is known to fragment habitat, displace local wildlife populations, and destroy the scenic beauty of the landscape; and

WHEREAS, coal bed methane development uses large volumes of water in the drilling process and contaminates ground and sub-surface water; and

WHEREAS, similar to the Valle Vidal, the remnant grasslands of the Otero Mesa in Otero and Sierra Counties are an environmental treasure, and constitute the largest

Chihuahuan Desert grassland in North America; and

WHEREAS, the Chihuahuan Desert supports a great diversity of native plants and wildlife, including mountain lions, coyotes, ringtail cats, desert mule deer, black-tailed prairie dogs, and New Mexico's healthiest population of pronghorn antelope, and is among the globally significant eco-regions identified by the World Wildlife Fund as deserving protection; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico ranchers, wilderness and conservation advocates, plant and animal conservation societies, and outdoor enthusiasts of all kinds value the unique characteristics of the Otero Mesa's deserts and grasslands;

WHEREAS, the Otero Mesa region has valuable underground water resources that should be protected from contamination; and

WHEREAS, the Otero Mesa region has a relatively low probability of producing economically recoverable quantities of oil and gas;

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE:

Section 1. That the City Council opposes oil and gas development in both the Valle Vidal and on the Otero Mesa, and encourages the members of New Mexico's Congressional Delegation to support Governor Richardson's and Representative Udall's efforts to preserve and protect both the Valle Vidal and the Otero Mesa.